

two weeks since Hurricane Harvey first made landfall in Texas, we have witnessed incredible cooperation among government agencies, individuals, charitable organizations, and others who have played an important role in the response, recovery, and relief efforts that have taken place over these past few weeks.

The intensity and frequency of these storms will only increase with time, as warmer oceans and extra heat in the atmosphere caused by climate change provide even more fuel for weather systems. Studies are already demonstrating that storms are intensifying significantly faster today than they did 25 years ago. Additional water vapor in the atmosphere is also leading to extreme precipitation. In fact, Hurricane Harvey brought more than 50 inches of rainfall to the Texas Gulf Coast, representing the greatest accumulation of rainfall ever recovered in the contiguous United States from a single tropical storm.

Mr. Speaker, we need to be taking these natural disasters and the environment more seriously. The financial and social costs to our society of these natural disasters are tremendous and the effects will only get worse. The role of the federal government in disaster response is critical to our nation's swift recovery. However, the level of coordination and resources necessary to properly respond to these historic natural disasters will grow with time as bigger and stronger natural events occur. For now, we must focus on the recovery at hand by assisting the victims and their families. Many survivors will remain unable to return to their homes for weeks, while others will be left cleaning up debris and other damage for months ahead. The federal response—and the compassion and help of others—is more important now than ever before.

IN RECOGNITION OF OAKCREST
SCHOOL'S NEW CAMPUS IN VI-
ENNA, VIRGINIA

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the grand opening of Oakcrest School's new campus in Virginia's 10th Congressional District on Saturday, September 9th in Vienna, Virginia. Together with the opening, the first annual Inaugural Homecoming reunited classmates, faculty and friends in celebration of this wonderful expansion. Oakcrest is an independently-owned, all-girls school, grades 6 to 12, that develops strong young women of character, inspiring these individuals to challenge, lead, and serve others through an instilled faith.

Founded in 1976 in Washington, D.C. with twenty-two students, Oakcrest has grown to serve over two-hundred-twenty-five young

women, making each student well-rounded, through their mission to educate the whole person, in intellect, character, faith and leadership. This new campus in Virginia's 10th Congressional District, will offer Oakcrest the ability to grow to 330 students and eventually 450 students when they complete the second phase of campus construction. Currently this 70,000 square foot building includes a three story Virginia manor house, housing two academic wings. Students will enjoy learning in the vibrant environments of the two science labs, two music rooms with acoustic treatments, art room, and large library with a fireplace and a media center. In addition, Oakcrest will continue to build their athletics program with a brand new natural grass and softball fields.

Inspired by the teachings of the Catholic Church and the spirituality of Opus Dei, Oakcrest School develops deep love in faith and strong learning abilities, through a rich liberal arts curriculum, character development, one-on-one mentoring and service to create an encouraging environment that graduates confident and courageous young women. I appreciate the role your educators have held in shaping the future of our nation. While teaching can be an arduous task, I know it comes with its share of fulfilling moments, both inside and outside the classroom, which now includes an annual school spirit Homecoming celebration. It is due to the tireless efforts of our educators that we are able to foster a positive and nurturing learning environment for our children, and this year, able to come together as an entire Oakcrest community in celebration of our past and future achievements. More than 1,200 friends, families, current and former faculty and alumnae joined to celebrate this exciting chapter in Oakcrest's history in bringing together the largest group of Oakcrest alumnae with over 120 graduates in attendance.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the Head of School, Mary T. Ortiz and the entire faculty, student body and alumnae at Oakcrest School for opening their new campus and working to unite Virginia's 10th Congressional District through this lifelong sisterhood. I wish Oakcrest a joyous year in support of lifelong faith, friendships and learning.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2018

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2017

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 3354) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes:

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Chair, my amendment would prohibit funds from being used to implement a misguided and harmful rule from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration regarding occupational exposure to respirable crystalline silica.

This destructive rule was first proposed in 2013 and significantly threatens jobs in a number of industries around the country including: construction, foundries, aggregates, oil and gas, brick manufacturers, maritime as well as several other industries.

The limits set in this rule are simply unworkable, without extraordinary costs to both workers and job creators in my district and manufacturing centers across America. We are talking about the loss of thousands upon thousands of American jobs.

Furthermore, even if these companies were able to meet this unreasonable requirement without putting hardworking Americans out of work, commercial laboratories have not been able to measure workplace silica levels with any accuracy or consistency making it nearly impossible for employers to determine if they are in compliance.

We are in the midst of strong economic growth, but burdensome regulations like this threaten our economic well-being. In fact, the cost of compliance for the construction industry alone has been estimated to be nearly \$5 billion per year.

This rule's impact on the Foundry industry would also be catastrophic. Independent analyses show it would cost the industry \$2.2 billion annually, which represents 9.9 percent of the industry's revenue and an astounding 276 percent of its profits.

Another key industry that will suffer under this regulation is hydraulic fracturing which uses tremendous amounts of sand. The American energy sector has boomed in recent years—increasing economic prosperity and creating thousands of jobs across America. Hydraulic fracturing is also a major reason why our nation has become more energy independent and allowed us to help our allies in Europe while countering countries such as Russia and Iran.

The deadline for the construction industry to comply with this rule is September 23.

We cannot stand by while another burdensome and unworkable regulation is piled on job creators that are finally starting to see growth. We need to act now to protect American Jobs. I encourage you to join me in voting for this amendment to stop this job-destroying rule.